



young archer

Join the Green Party

By Diana Cormack

If you're having a birthday in the next few months, you may be trying to think of a different way to celebrate with your friends. When you've done McDonalds, made a splash at the swimming pool, had a sleep-over, killed at Quasar, been to the cinema, theatre or ten pin bowling, it gets a bit difficult to think of something special. However, I have a suggestion that you might find interesting.

The Barnet Countryside

Centre in Byng Road, Barnet - an area of green belt which some of you may have visited with your schools - organises children's birthday parties with an environmental theme. One of their experienced staff members will lead an activity of your choice. These include a pond safari, mini beast safari (summer only), orienteering trails, treasure hunts, scavenger hunts, and close encounters with their collection of animals. They have donkeys, rabbits, guinea pigs, geese, hens and ducks, though you might not want to get too

close to the tarantula spider, snakes or giant snails!

Open house

The centre is in the very north of Barnet, overlooking Hertfordshire, and is set in 7.5 acres of land containing a nature reserve with trees, ponds and meadows. There is a picnic area, animal paddocks and enclosures, whilst the main building contains a multi-purpose activity room, animal room and toilets (including facilities for the disabled).

Parties can be booked for Saturdays or Sundays 10.30am to 12.30pm and 2.00 to 4.00pm or after school between 4.00 and 6.00pm. The age range is five to eleven years and groups must be a minimum of ten and a maximum of 15 children. It costs £6 per child and you can order a party bag of centre souvenirs for £1.50 extra. That will save mum from having to do it!

Party on

Sorry, but I'm afraid that the food will still depend on her! At the end of the one and a quarter hour activity session there is a room available for 45 minutes of partying, this session being organised and run by your parents. So any food, drink, games etc will be down to them. Activities at the centre do depend on the time of year and you can book more than one activity per group, depending on your age. You can discuss all this when you book.

If you are interested, get mum or dad to ring the centre for more information and a booking form. The telephone number is 0181 449 6691 or write to The Centre Warden, Ian Limbrick, The Barnet Countryside Centre, Byng Road, Barnet EN5 4NP.

Father's Day

By Diana Cormack

When I was a child there was no such thing as Father's Day. We had the traditional Mothering Sunday on the fourth Sunday in Lent and, in some other countries, they celebrated Mother's Day on the second Sunday in May. This was a comparatively recent invention initiated by an American woman called Anna Jarvis. After her own mother's death in 1905 she successfully campaigned to have a special day to honour mothers and eventually succeeded with a presidential proclamation.

However, when she died in 1948, she was unhappy with the way the day had developed. Instead of a caring day of simple enjoyment and loving remembrance, it had become a huge moneymaking event. Businesses promoted it with expensive cards and presents and so Anna's original idea became lost in the world of commercialism.

Card sharps

It was about twenty years later that the idea of a special day for fathers began to emerge. I believe that it was promoted by card and gift companies as another yet another way of making money, but I also think that it was linked in some way to the feminist movement. In the struggle for equality, was it right to have a special day for the female parent but not the male?

My own father had very strong views about this. When Father's Day finally reached our shores he ordered that none of his children should buy him a card or a present for the second Sunday in June.

Present tense

"Mothering Sunday has always been traditional in this country", he said. "Father's Day is just an American invention to get you to spend your money!"

We took no notice of him, of course. We wanted to make Dad feel special too and let him know how much we loved and appreciated him. It seemed only fair! Nowadays he accepts things with only the odd protest. Your dads are probably only used to accepting Father's Day in the way it has developed, a way which I'm sure delights the card

and present producers.

But that sort of thing doesn't always work. About ten years ago they tried to promote a Grandparent's Day in September. I remember seeing a huge advert for it near East Finchley tube station and some cards were on sale in the shops. It didn't catch on though, nor did things like Nurse's Day, Secretary's Day, Teacher's Day and other such days which are promoted in the USA.

Whatever next? They might even decide to have a Children's Day, but you wouldn't want any more presents and treats, would you?!!

clever clogs corner

All about fathers:-

- 1 Who was the father of Cain and Abel?
- 2 Whose father was swallowed by a whale?
- 3 Which father only goes out to work on one day of the year?
- 4 Who shot an arrow through an apple balanced on his son's head?
- 5 Who is the father of Prince Charles?
- 6 Which father lost his son when he flew too close to the sun using home-made wings?
- 7 Who was the father of Queen Elizabeth I?
- 8 Whose father abandoned his two children in the forest?
- 9 What do we call the father of a lamb?
- 10 Which father traditionally carries a scythe?

The Moos Headlines

Please hear the story of old Daisy, who is the unfortunate cow that mislaid her moo. She awoke in her field to greet the new morn, she sat up to moo, and found it had gone.

Now all of her sisters that lived in the herd said, "What's up with Daisy, she's not said a word. She loves to join in with our girlish chatter, we really are worried that something's the matter".

Poor Daisy had puffed 'til her poor face was blue, she tried and she tried but she just couldn't moo. Her anxious friends all clustered around, a great deal more puffing - but still not a sound.

The word was soon spread as they all heard the news, "Have you heard about Daisy? She's mislaid her moos. We must do something, this just won't do. A cow's not a cow without her moo".

So they all got together and devised a plan. "We'll find that moo if anyone can!"

With a lot of discussion a plan was hatched, to each part of the field a cow was dispatched.

They searched and searched each yard of ground. The missing moo was never found.

The head of the herd said with mounting alarm, "We must widen the search to the rest of the farm".

The horses and chickens, the ducks and geese too, were quickly instructed to look for the moo. Meanwhile poor Daisy just stood in despair. Her poor missing moo, it MUST be somewhere.

All day all the animals searched high and low, they searched until twilight with nothing to show. They'd checked all the buildings, the farmyard, the brook: they just couldn't think where else they might look.

Just then from a tree, a little bird flew, and clutched in his beak was what looked like a moo. The animals cheered, and to a round of applause the bird said to Daisy, "I believe this is yours".

"I was flying out shopping when I heard the to do. There, snagged on a bramble I spotted the moo. I flew down and took it, and here it is now, I return it with pleasure to Daisy the cow".

Then all the kind animals stood there and waved as the bird flew off smiling, the day having saved. Our story has ended as good stories do, with Daisy united once more with her moo.

She thanked all the animals, the dogs and the cats, and again joins the girls in their long daily chats.

By Gerry Ingram circa 1997

The Sky

When I look upon the dark sky at night,
Seeing the stars twinkling so bright,
The crescent moon,
Will go down soon,
And leave the stars high above,
And leave the stars in darkness,
In peace, happiness and love!

By Myrto Williams, aged 9, Hertford Road, N2.

joke

An Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman were stranded on an island. They came across a bird's eye. The Englishman and the Irishman said, "I'm not having that," but the Scotsman said, "I will." Then they came across a fish. The Englishman and the Irishman said, "I'm not having that". The Scotsman said, "I will." Next they came across some monkey fingers. The Englishman and the Irishman said "I'm not having them." The Scotsman said, "I will." When they got back home, their wives said, "What did you have to eat?" The Englishman and the Irishman said, "Nothing," but the Scotsman said, "I had bird's eye, fish, fingers".

By George Sortiri, aged 11, Chambers Gardens, N2.

Answers:-

- 1 Adam
- 2 Pinocchio
- 3 Father Christmas
- 4 William Tell
- 5 Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh
- 6 Daedalus
- 7 Henry the Eighth
- 8 Hansel and Gretel's
- 9 A ram
- 10 Old Father Time